Some Considerations

TOUCHING

The present Debate between OWNERS, *&c.*
And FISHERMEN, *relating*

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY.

TO

The New-found-land Trade

WHEREIN

The present Project of obstructing Passengers, BY-BOATS, &c. *is proved to be an unjust, sinister, envious, and unreasonable designe.*

Humbly Presented to Supream Consideration

BY

The Impartial Pen of an eye-witness both of the Designes at Home, and the Trade abroad.

Qui statuit aliquid parte inauditâ alterâ,
Æquum licet statuerit, haud æquus fuit. Sen. Med.

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Donat. Trend. Lt. 1
Jan. 7. 1848.

Some Considerations touching the present Debate concerning Passengers, *&c. to* NEWFOUND-LAND.

THAT man (saith incomparable *Bacon*, Es. 9.) *That hath no vertue in himself, envieth it in others.* It is but to alter the terms, and say, *A man that doth not prosper himself, envieth the prosperity of others.* Too apparent will the truth of this be in the present Case, to any who shall impartially scan, and seriously enquire into the ground of the present project, which hath bin of late years on foot against a sort of Industrious, Laborious men, carried on by a few sinister persons, who have practically and interpretatively told the world, that they design and contrive to ingross to themselves the bulk of that vast Trade (not unfitly reckoned among the most profitable ones of the Nations) that of *New-found-land Fishery*: and this contention is blown into a flame by the groundless breath of misled ignorance,

and

and the ſenſleſs clamours of ſome unreaſonable ſpirits, which like Dogs bark for company, and are content to ſpeak as their Incendiaries doe, and without inquiring into the juſtneſs, or reaſonableneſs of the point, proceed like unjuſt Judges to condemn without hearing any thing from Defendant, or Adverſe party; who in this caſe to (ſpeak ſtrictly) paſs under an inevitable condemnation, for whatever is alleadged againſt them, by being incapable either with Money, Opportunity, Friends above, *&c.* to countermine, anticipate, or meet with the deſignes of thoſe (who are too potent in all theſe) againſt them. Which too truly verifieth that of the Poet *Petronius*.

Quiſquis habet Nummos, ſecurâ naviget aurâ,
Fortunamq; ſuo temperet arbitrio,
Uxorem ducat Danaen, ipſumq; licebit
Acriſium jubeat credere quod Danaen,
Carmina componat, declamet, concrepet, omnes
Et peragat cauſas, ſitque Catone prior,
Juris conſultus, paret, non paret, *habeto,*
Atque eſto quicquid Servius aut Labeo.
Multa loquor: quidvis nummis præſentibus opta,
Et veniet,——

Before I enter into the bulk of the diſcourſe, give me leave to aſſure you, that I am altogether unconcerned on either ſide; nor do I ſtand in that relation to the one or other, as might bias my judg-

ment

ment, or betray my reaſon to be partial, or prevaricate for either party: I have received no Fee from either to make me write Sophiſtically, but having for four years been an eye-witneſs of the tranſactions at Home, as well as of the manner of Fiſhing Abroad in that Country, have thereby had opportunity to diſcern, the unreaſonableneſs of thoſe grounds propoſed to hinder the Defendants from following their labour, in the way of Fiſhing in thoſe parts. Which I have here publiſhed very conciſely, couching my Reaſons and diſcourſe in as few words, and narrow lines as poſſibly I could.

The Caſe *Is thus*, A few honeſt *Fiſhermen* acquainted with the *New-found-land*, joyn ſtocks together, hire men, provide themſelves with all neceſſary Proviſions for that Voyage; and not able to act in the method of a *Merchant*, keep ſome, One *Boat*, others two, three, *&c.* It may be, One *Boat* among two, or three men: A number of theſe *Boat-keepers* joyn & fraight a Ship for the tranſportation of themſelves and proviſions: Some take paſſage at *three pounds per* man. Theſe (as others ſet forth by *Merchants*) Fiſh and labour very induſtriouſly, and run the ſame hazard in all reſpects that *Merchants* do, and thereby do frequently gain to themſelves ſome what more then by the wages uſually given by the *Merchants*, did they act in their imploy. Theſe men in every reſpect act as *Maſters*, *Merchants*, *&c.* do.

They imploy *Seamen* on the ſame terms. They breed up *Seamen*, Fraight *Ships*, *Fiſh*, &c. every way proportionable to any that uſe that Country: whereby they advance Trade, Increaſe the Kings *Cuſtome*, &c. as much or more *per Rata* than other owners of *Fiſhing voyages*: many of which improperly call themſelves *Merchants*.

Theſe men being generally of a more thriving and induſtrious nature than ſome others, and thereby ſucceeding better in their voyage then others, are therefore become of late the very objects of *Merchants* envy at home, and of *Maſters* (imployed on the ſame Trade) abroad, who wanting the like induſtry, and coming ſhort thereby of the like ſucceſs, do not ſeldom excuſe it with laying the ſubſequent charge againſt *By-Boats*: Evidently making good the words of that great *Stateſman*, the Lord *Verulam*, Eſ. 9. *That man which cannot act in the vertue (of which Diligence is a part) of another, will ſeek to come at even hand with him, by ſeeking to depreſs the others fortune.* And if it ſavour not too much of Cenſoriouſneſs and Barbariſm. *Act. Apoſt.* c. 28. v. 4. I would obſerve, That the Voyages immediately ſucceeding the time, when the Spleens of theſe poor mens Enemies had been moved moſt (whereby very few of them and thoſe by ſurreptition and ſtealth have bin able to obtain Tranſportation) have proved the worſt that ever

ever were in that Country, witness *Anno D.* 1664. What a *Muddy* stir was there made at *Dartmouth*, and the circumjacent Country against the poor *By-Boats*, What allegations were put into the *Counsel*, and *Parliament* (if I mistake not) which being unanswered by the Defendants, there was a *supersedeas* clapt upon their intentions for *New-found-land*, and that year the Merchants made the worst Voyages that were ever known before: And the year after the *Dutch* War coming in, *de Ruiter* the *Belgian* Admiral went and burnt the Ships in that Country, in which none suffered more than those that had bin most pertinacious against *By-boats*. I need not name any, and am unwilling to measure the length of any mans just proceedings by his prosperity, or to censure him of an evil heart by any adversity, for time and chance hapeneth to all, and those on whom the Tower in *Siloam* fell were not sinners above all them in *Jerusalem*, and do believe goodness and greatness are not alwaies concomitant.

But to proceed, The *Dutch* War happily ended, *Merchants* and *By-boats*, promiscuously provide for the *Fishing* without distinction or grudge, as if all former animosity had been forgotten, and that year (1668) making great Voyages they are on all hands satisfied, and nothing at all objected against the *By-boats*: but in the year (1669)

the Ships make poor, and the *By-boats* generally great Voyages. Upon return to *England*, the feud is again fomented, and *Merchants* Petition again to the *Privy Council*, urging vehement complaints against the *By-boats*; that they ruined the Trade, by ingrossing the best Fishermen to themselves, by giving greater wages then others can. Those of *Dartmouth*, *Plymouth*, *&c.* meet at *Modbury* about that affair, (facetiously called the *Modbury Junctо*) but the issue came to late, for the Ships for *Terra Nova* were almost all gone before that came down into the *West*: only some few had the unhappiness to be behind, and were stopt.

Here let me not forget to observe, That at the very time the *West-Country Owners* were acting, & contriving the Premises at *Modbury*, Mr. *Boughton* their Factor in *London* played least in sight, with Five or Six Thousand pounds of their Money, in which the Actors were mostly concerned, and the *By-boats* not Eighty pounds upon my certain knowledge. And to second that misfortune, This year there were made such Voyages by the ships in general as the like was never known before, by any man; for though in the beginning of the Fishing, we have great hopes, yet the whole Schoole (as it is there termed) suddenly left them, as if Heaven would punish them with the torment of *Tantalus*: whereby the *Merchants* made not half as formerly,

and yet the diligent, and painful *By-boats* came off indifferently well. And now they are accosted with more violence then before, and new methods proposed for their eradication; New errours are alleadged, though they had complied with the Articles of the Patent of *New-found-land* inlarged by his present Majesty; yet a new Project is set on foot, and that is to propose for an *Act*, *That all the men in one Ship must be under one Master, and make one share.* What shall then the *Planters* do? They must be incouraged and supplyed, otherwise must leave the Country, which being not inhabited is free for any other Nation; Possession being the only inheritance thereof. But if this be complyed withal by them, if they thrive that way, then I am confident there will be new Errours found out. I remember I have read, that the Emperour *Frederick*'s Physitians being asked what did most sharpen the sight, it was variously answered, *Herba Euphrasia, Fœniculi, Celendinæ, Tutiæ calam, Optick Glasses, &c.* A by-stander replyed, nothing would do it better then *Envy.* It is clearly manifest that the complainers designs are wholy to Extirpate the Defendants, not to rectifie the miscarriages, and hinderances of the Trade, pretended to be created by them.

But I cannot but wonder how that assembly at *Modbury* could escape being noted as a *Seditious Confederacy*, Many had the Sagacity to

avoid it who were yet enemies to *By-boats*: Surely they had come within the Mulct of the *Act* against *Seditious Conventicles*, had it been then in force, it being evident (according to the incomparable Lord *Bacon*, *ut supra*) that *Invidia*, the Latine word for *Envy*, goeth in the Modern Languages for *Discontentment*, and *Sedition* is the effect of *Discontent*, *&c.* Now that that act of the *Plaintiffs* was Envious is apparent to any, Inasmuch as (according to my own most certain knowledge) those that do most stickle at it, do themselves not only take *Passengers* to fraight on their own Ships, but have bin concerned in the Voyage with *Boat-keepers*. There remaineth now that I accumulate the general Objections urged by *Merchants*, and answering them I shall adde somthing in defence of *By-boats*.

Objection 1. The First, and most seemingly formidable of all their Arguments, or Objections is, *That they ingross to themselves the most able Fishermen in the Country: inducing them by large wages, and greater priviledges then can possibly be granted to such as properly belong to Ships: Hereby the choice being taken off, none are left for the Merchants imploy but the inferiour, and lesse capable sort, by which the Ships are manned only with such as may be said to be the refuse of the others.*

Ans. This is so notoriously false, that any man using the Country cannot but be acquainted, how that those who one season served *By-boats*, another serve on Ships; and most do by a kind of Vicissitude or circulation, serve in either successively. And indeed that which maketh those in *By-boats* appear so able, is their extream diligence, and indefatigable labour, beyond those of Ships; I mean in fishing, though God knoweth the Twelve labours of *Hercules*, had they bin really acted, were scarce able to endure competition with the general toil of men in this Country, which is so great as no tongue is able to express it. Now that which prompts and incourageth them to this more then common diligence & pains, is occasioned by the policy of their Masters, who concern the *Boats-masters* in some small part of the voyage beyond their shares of the Thirds: A notable way and a spur to those Horses (in labour) which is not to be found in Ships crewes. Now I would fain know, If the world can produce a man, that will so much act beyond (were it possible) his own strength to serve another, as to serve himself. I will instance one notorious *Example*. There was one *John Beard* in 1668 that belonged to a Ship of fourteen Boats, upon account of one Mr. *Martyn* their Owner of *Plymouth*; who proved so Lazy, Careless, and Unable, that at the return for *England* he was denied

his wages, and it was given to the Poor of the Parish he lived in: This same man, to my knowledge, the year after, becoming interested and part *Owner* of two *Boats* kept in St. *Johns* by one *Robert Martyn*, went himself Master of one of them, where night and day he so plied his work, that they made 320 and odd *kentals* for each, when the common Voyages in the same Harbours were about 160 *kentals per Boat:* Several not 120 *kent.* This famous act of his industry made him reputed an able man again, and therefore was hired by a *Planter* in the same Harbour for 24*l.* to be a Master of one single *Boat*, the poor *Planter* kept the following year: When being unInterested, and having good wages, he fell to his old tricks, and caught less Fish for his *Boat* then any among two hundred that were then in the Harbour; and was trebly exceeded by many. I have known the like complained of by others.

Object. 2. *That the* By-boats *give greater wages, which hath raised men to that height, that* Masters *cannot live to give it, nor* Owners *to allow it.*

Ans. But this is so weak and trivial, that it hardly merits answer, when it shall be considered, whether *Merchants*, which set out for that design at cheaper rates then *By-boats* can do, who pay the dearest rate for fraight, *&c.* Every thing cannot live to give as good and as great incouragement

to

as men by wages as the others. Moreover, I have examined the Case, and found, that generally *By-boats* give far less then others. The *None-Such* of *Dartmouth* having 15 Boats-crew on private account, had not one Boats-master (1670) that had above one share and six pounds, whereas I know several in Ships had one share and eight pounds. If any to salve this alleadge, it is because the men are mostly willing and affected to the *Boat-keepers*, then the Objection is answered by themselves, and their giving great wages is not that which injureth the *Merchant*, or inclineth the men from Ships accounts.

Object. 3. *That* By-boats *breed not up green men*, viz. *carry Youths to Sea as Ships do, to nourish them in the way of Trade, and for service of his Majestie on occasion at Sea.*

Ans. Which is altogether untrue, for according to Rate they carry as many Youths as commonly are belonging to the Ships. This is evident to any one who shall but rightly examine it by an inquiry at home, or in the Country.

Object. 4. New-England *Fishery being decayed, is urged as an Argument against* By-boats *for* Terra Nova, *upon consequence supposing the same fate to* New-found-land, *if they are permitted, as they have been in* New-England.

Ans.

Anſ. This is purely Sophiſtical, and not liable to any proof; For who can affirm, that *Biſcay* boats have bin the cauſe of that: Indeed the Cultivation of the ground a ſhore, the Amendment of the Air, and the Population of that Country may with good reaſon be urged in the caſe: For without doubt, there remains a kind of an Antipathy in thoſe Animals, as in all others, againſt whatever is humane, which is the effect of that awe God gave them to their Superiour Creature *Man*, as is evident in all Animals of the Land, Sea, or Amphibious: And it is very probable to be occaſioned, as above, becauſe of the proximate Countries of *Nova Scotiæ*, *Terra Nova*, *&c.* where the land is uncultivated, and almoſt not inhabited, the Fiſh continueth almoſt as formerly, What abatement there is, may by any that own a Remunerative Juſtice and Providence, be attributed in part to the Juſtice of Heaven, for our Ingratitude, Envy, *&c.* and ſubordinately to the frequent Fires in the Woods, whereby the *Firr* and *Spruſs* trees being burnt, the *Turpentine* and *Tarr* runs on the ground, which when Rain cometh is waſhed into the Rivers, whereby the Sea is alſo become imbittered, which deſtroyeth the Bait, and chaſeth off the Fiſh: It having been obſerved to be true upon the great Fires, which often happen in the Woods, which though green is very combuſtible. But as to that of *New-England*, the

Fiſhing

Fishing beginning to fail, *Merchants* were forced to forsake the Trade, upon which only (such as are in *New-found-land*) *By-boats* enter into the Trade, and by their diligence (beyond Ships companies) they being but few, do live well upon the Trade, and do find Fish fourteen, sixteen leagues from the land to be very plenty: which maketh for the truth of our supposition in the beginning of this Answer, *viz.* That the gust of the waters are altered, which puts the Fish from the shore.

Object. 5. *That this being a matter of Trade properly belongeth to Merchants, for their Priviledges and way being incroacht upon, Trading by degrees will fail.*

Ans. But how properly catching of Fish may be called the work of a *Merchant* any more then Planting *Tobacco*, *Sugar*, *Indico*, I know not, If so, there are more *Merchants* in *Barking*, *Tarrkey*, *Bobicom*, *Looe*, *Mountsbay*, and *Sorlings*, then in *London*. Moreover, the most of those pretending injury by the *By-boats* in *New-found-land*, are no more *Merchants* then my self, who am none, they being so only in Title, and impropriation; and so deserve oppugnation as much as *By-boats*. Men of divers Trades at home, adventuring under the way and notion of *Merchants*, only to catch Fish, and sell it there, to others, not hazarding it abroad

broad themſelves, which is that which only merits the name of Trade: And theſe forſooth muſt ſubſcribe to the Petition againſt *By-boats*, under the name of *We the Merchants, &c.*

I know not what more can be Objected, or hath bin urged by the ſharpeſt enemies againſt *By-boats*, as the preſent caſe ſtandeth; and I verily believe were thoſe Articles ever ſo ſtrictly obſerved, which have been made againſt thoſe men, yet they thriving that way, will queſtionleſs be reproached again of being other waies inconvenient to the way of *Fiſhery*.

We come now to our laſt work, the ſum and concluſion of the preſent Task, and that is to lay down ſome Arguments in behalf of thoſe envied men, in whoſe defence I have taken up the Gauntlet, and undertook to anſwer the Challenge, and certainly I have that Charity for the Reaſons to be urged in their behalf, as to think they will ſatisfie any perſon, not altogether bent againſt Information, and whoſe pertinacity is not Reaſon-proof.

Firſt, That the violence of the oppoſitions uſed againſt theſe men hath but ſet them in a more abſolute, and convenient way then they formerly acted in, for from being *Paſſengers* they drove them to fraight Ships, and ſome of them to be *Owners*. Under which way they cannot prevent or deny

them to follow the Fiſhery, except they deny the *Merchants* alſo: And do they ſtill proceed by their indirect oppoſition, they will in fine rather advance, then any way ſuppreſs them, by compelling them to aſcend to be perfect *Owners* of Ships themſelves, and then they will be a greater Eye-ſore then now: Even as the Chriſtians thrived wonderfully under the moſt Barbarous Perſecution: and as by *Antiperiſtaſis*, (ſome believe) Heat is fortified by the inviron of Cold, *&* *contra*: So do theſe thrive and ſtrengthen under the evil eye of their Oppoſers; like *Antæus*, and as *Ovid de Arte Amandi* ſaid of Love, *Adverſo tempore, crevit amor*; ſo I ſay of theſe Oppoſitions, *Difficultas acuit conatum.*

2. That theſe *By-boats* are more advantagious in the Fiſhing then *Ships crews*, for their exceeding induſtry and ſucceſs, do catch more Fiſh generally according to proportion then the others, and at no greater charge of Men or Proviſions, (excepting Salt) then thoſe that poſſibly do not catch half ſo much: and my ſelf have known *Maſters* of Voyages acting for *Merchants*, (though profeſſed enemies to *By-boats*) have deſired to have had their Stages neareſt to thoſe of the *By-boats*, that the intereſted induſtry of the one, might be a ſpurr to the other, and moſt *Maſters* Fiſhing in any Harbour upon account of *Merchants*, will raile

and rebuke their Fishermen, for not bringing in as much Fish as those of *By-boats*: Now if (as hath bin alleadged) the *By-boats* men are the most able, how can the Masters expect their men to equal them? or what pertinence, or ground of complaint can be upon the comparison of their own men with the others; when they bring not home the like quantity of Fish as others do, whom they confess to be far abler men, and make their difference to be the greatest ground of their complaint at home?

3. That men and Ships are imployed, Provisions expended, Fish caught, *&c.* every way proportionably by *By-boats*, as by the others, so that the King in his *Custome*, or the Nation in the imployment of the people, *&c.* have no cause of complaint.

4. That many of the Complainers against *By-boats*, do tacitly accuse themselves, they deserving no other name and appellation, although they assume the Title of *Merchants*, when, *de facto*, they are of all Trades, and some the most inferiour Mechanicks.

5. That it is the Fishermens being interested in the Voyage (as I have said) is the alone cause of their exceeding others, sufficiently proved in the example above quoted.

6. It is sufficient profit for the *Merchant* to have the Sale and Transportation to the Market of all the fish catcht in the Land, and not to be also

Fishermen; as hath been already spoken to.

7. That were the whole Trade ingrost into the hands of such as go not to the Country themselves, both Masters and Men would be constrained to labour upon *Merchants* terms, which with the bad Voyages hath driven many to become *By-boats*, as themselves have confessed: and were Men and Masters brought to such low wages as *Merchants* would give, they could not possibly live by the imployment; Now if those that keep *Boats* can allow themselves & men good wages *&c.* why cannot *Merchants* do the same?

8. The real *Merchants* gain by those men who with the *Planters* are only *Merchants* to buy the *Wine, Brandy, Malt, Salt, Bread, Provisions, &c.* which is yearly Transported, by which the *Merchants* are often considerable gainers. Now if all were Ships crewes they would each bring his own Provisions, and so nothing would be vendible, to incourage the *Merchant* to send thither to buy off the Fish.

9. That a *Merchant* in *Dartmouth*, who hath all along appeared the most bitter and violent against *By-boats*, and in *Anno* 1664 furiously acted against them, did, to my knowledge, in 1669 send two *Boats crew passengers* on a Ship wherein he was part concerned, and in a Ship of his at the same time permitted six men belonging to *Thomas*

Bickford a *By-boat-keeper* to have passage, and the same *Bickford* had four men more *passengers* upon a Ship, wherein Mr. *E. S.* of *London* was concerned: The first *Merchant* hinted in this Article is Mr. *A. M.* the Ship called the *Unity* of *Dartmouth*, and Fished that Voyage in St. *Jones*.

10. That the one quarter part of the pretenders to suffer by *By-boats*, and of those that complain against them are altogether ignorant wherein the cause of that injury lyeth, and do no more understand the reasons of those things they proceed upon, then they do to build Castles in the Air; but being fed with the fancy of others, yelp out the same Logick, and draw Conclusions without any other Premises then such as they cannot make good (if denyed) but by quoting them as the opinion or dictates of another, without Reason or Demonstration; and yet I observe none more active and vehement then those. Nay further, I have observed many pretending to the Title of *Merchants*, and altogether unconcern'd in the *New-found-land* Trade, have with such ignorance declaimed against *By-boats*, when upon examination they know not what *By-boats* were, and wherein the discrepancy between them and *Merchants* stood. So peremptory is the ignorance of *Medlers*, that they will give answer to questions they never heard stated: A gift I never met with, or heard

of

of in any meer Man; except *Daniel*, who indeed Interpreted the King of *Babylons* Dream when it was not told him. Now let any judge of the validity of such mens appearing in the Case, and what a grand abuse is offered to the Honour of the Supream Powers by thus prevaricating in Petitions.

I will Conclude with one Observation I made lately: Being at the *Post-house* in ..... where *Merchants* meet to look for News and Letters, there came in a servant of a *Merchant* of the City (chiefly active against *By-boats*) and brought a Blank Sheet of Paper, and got above Forty subscriptions to nothing; Now my self being called to subscribe, I demanded for what? The man answered it was to be put to a Petition against *Passengers* to the *New-found-land*, I refused, but saw several subscribe for company sake, who were neither *Merchants*, nor understood the matter: all that came for Letters put their hands to it, except my self, and yet no Petition to be seen; so that they put their Names to they knew not what.

We hope these things will be considered, and the Laborious incouraged, and find the truth of those Verses of *Claudian*

Fallitur

Fallitur, egregio quisquis is sub principe credit
Servitium, nusquam libertas gratior extat
Quam sub Rege pio ———

He knows no bondage whom a good King swayes,
For freedom never shines with clearer rayes
Then when brave Princes Reign ———

That which hath so vehemently Incensed *Merchants* at home against *By-boats*, Is the bad Voyages which of late have been made in that Country, the cause of which hath been falsly layd on *By-boats*, when indeed the multitude of Ships & Boats there, and the unreasonable pressing of Ships full of men, and the untimely and early departure of one before another is partly the cause, this year 1676. several departed 30 dayes before the main body of the *Fleet*, and only to anticipate and forestal others of places, whereby they were at a vaster expence, and moreover did by the early intolerable cold almost kill the men, before the Fish came on the Coast; when those that came last fared as well, & with less charge to themselves, and damage to their men, and so could better endure a bad Voyage then others. It would be better if all Ships were bound not to sayle until *March*, and that the proportion of one man to two Tunnes were commanded, and that some abuses in the Country were rectified, but of that

let

let thoſe endeavour the emendation, who are the ſufferers thereby.

I have no more to adde, only crave the Readers candor to wink at the faults of the *Printer*, or *Author*. I mean thoſe that are Literal: It was penned at firſt Raptive, and in haſt, and hath not had a due Reviſion: The reaſon inducing me to be *Anonymus*, in this, relates to my ſelf. I am as unwilling to have the Smile of the one party, as to Inſence the Spleen of the other: I hope the not nameing the *Author*, will no way Invalidate, or prejudice the Diſcourſe.

FINIS.